

**Mexico: Assistance in Bid Process for New Engines
September 8 – 15, 2002 & September 12 – 21, 2002**

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Background and Objectives:

In July 1999, under an exchange program between BLM and the Secretariat of Environment, Natural Resources, and Fisheries (SEMARNAT), two Mexican fire managers came to the U.S. to study BLM's wildland fire engine program. They spent most of their two-week stay in Shoshone, Idaho. Based on the information and knowledge obtained during that exchange, SEMARNAT was interested in purchasing 15 heavy class wildland fire engines. They used BLM specifications for the bidding process, which closed September 9, 2002.

SEMARNAT requested the assistance of Mr. Robert Stroud, the supervisor of the BLM, Equipment Development Unit, located at NIFC. He was requested to provide guidance in the evaluation process.

Activities:

Mexico had set up a one-day meeting, September 11th, for all individuals/companies that were interested in bidding for the vehicles. To prepare for this meeting with the public, I spent two days with the SEMARNAT officials, reviewing and answering questions about the technical specifications.

I was not a member of the panel, but listened to the discussions. It was interesting to sit in on the public meeting! Mexico has a very different way of doing business than we do here in the U.S. The discussions were very animated, and heated. However, after the meeting everyone was calm. In addition, many of the perspective bidders, wanted to be able to submit bids for the equipment that did not meet the specifications, but that they felt were just as good.

After returning to the U.S., I was requested to return to Mexico City, to provide technical assistance as far as actually reviewing the bids submitted, and ensuring that they met the specifications. Which I did.

As a side note, the successful bidder was S&S Fire Apparatus from Indiana, USA, and eleven of the engines are being purchased